

# Presentation to **Alameda City Council 2024**

*Valerie Turpen, President Alameda Museum*

# Alameda Historical Society



**1948**

Alameda Historical Society is founded and Fred Croll is elected President.

**1950**

The City funds renovation of a room in the basement of the library for meetings and displays of a historical collection. The Historical Room opens in 1951 on Wednesdays 1:30 pm - 4:00 pm.

**Oakland Tribune**



ALAMEDA CITY'S RELICS ARE SAVED BY HISTORICAL SOCIETY



Acc. No. 00.315.1  
**Fred Croll**  
*was Deputy Assessor for the City of Alameda in 1906.*

*He is shown above at the office in 1909.*

# THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

## March 2020 - June 2021

We are continuing to live with the effects and consequences of the Coronavirus Pandemic. With stay at home orders in Alameda and across the world, life as we knew it ceased in March 2020. The doors of the museum closed for fifteen months.

- Our lecture series was canceled.
- Estate sales ceased.
- The museum lost our Treasurer of many years.
- Curator George Gunn retired after 50 years at the museum.
- Board members, members, and docents moved.

*The museum desk calendar remained on March 15 for over a year.*



# Accomplishments During Closure

- The *Alameda Museum Quarterly* continued to be published.
- Pop-up exhibits filled the museum windows.
- The museum created an ebook online of Imelda Merlin's book *Alameda, a Geographical History* which is out of print.
- The museum archives were converted to a searchable database in CatalogIt. Over 20,000 3 x 5 accession cards were scanned for their typed content. Each object continues to be photographed.
- A scanner was purchased thanks to grant funding. This will help record hundreds of photos, negatives, and 35mm slides in the collection.
- The textile collection was reviewed, researched, and photographed and is being preserved in handmade acid-free boxes.
- The newspaper storage racks were re-organized for easier access.

# The Quarterly

Our newsletter tells stories of our city relying heavily on the museum archives and those doing research.

ISSUE NUMBER 3 • SEPTEMBER 2022

# Alameda Museum Quarterly

## ALAMEDA'S RADIO PIONEERS

by Bob Rydzewski, Fellow and Deputy Archivist, California Historical Radio Society, Alameda, CA

In the earliest years of the twentieth century a group of young Alamedans played an amateur role in the evolution of what we knew as "radio" but which they called "wireless." And appropriately the story, until for over a decade a recent effort from research done by the California Historical Radio Society (CHRS) located on Central Avenue right here in Alameda.

Today we mostly think of radio in terms of television, but the amateur service for several decades before that became its primary use. Marconi first proved that a "wireless" signal could be sent and received in 1901 and for about the next 20 years its illegal use was in military and commercial communications with ships at sea. But the "height" of wireless was the imagination of teenage whiz kids, who set up their own amateur stations to transmit and receive messages. But the field back then was a bit like the one we have today.

First, there were no laws regulating it. You didn't need a license to get on the air and transmit. Anyone could send out messages on any frequency with as much power as they wanted. And the fact is that since metal vacuum tubes had not yet been invented, signals were produced by generating sparks. Communication was in Morse code dots and dashes since much more sophisticated electronic equipment was not yet available. You didn't buy a radio; you bought or made the parts and put them together yourself. Mom's sewing needle, a coil of wire, pieces of metal, and wood were all standard ingredients for self-constructed sets which were truly "as primitive as can be." The power usually came from a light socket in the wall, and the sets were not uncommon for times becoming casualties. But some early amateur radio operators, lasting after a stronger signal, opted for climbing up power poles and then connecting to the high voltage lines—tragically—but not surprisingly—a few were electrocuted.

It's been known that the San Francisco Bay area had the hottest amateur radio activity, but the additional confirmation that Alameda amateurs made to the development of radio has not been acknowledged. Radio stations in Alameda had moved and moved to hold its own against larger Bay Area cities when it came to pioneering amateur stations and their operators. Even before 1910, with a few exceptions, the Pacific Fleet had left at least four young Alamedans whose wireless transmissions would end up being heard on ships that reached from San Francisco to Washington, D.C. to the East China Sea.

### Fred Mudgett and the Great San Francisco Earthquake

Fred Mudgett lived with his parents at 2305 Santa Clara Avenue, across the street from City Hall. His connection with the latter was a quick one: after a long antenna wire strayed into the city hall, it was cut, shorted out, and then tethered to the flagpole atop the now long-gone City Hall clock tower, the highest point in Alameda. "I was always up there with a electrical dry cell," he said. "I would always attach a wire to the antenna and then read the study of electricity about 8 years ago [1897] as a pastime." Fred graduated from Alameda High in 1904 and was soon earning \$100 a day at the 1906 San Francisco Earthquake, called FM (its initials) code communiqué with nearby amateur stations. U.S. Navy stations at Goat Island (today's Yerba Buena) Island, Mare Island, and the Tillamook Bay area with some ships at sea, according to the Alameda Daily Argus.

Continued on page 2...

AMQ September 2022

*Fred Mudgett, age 14, attached his radio antennae to the City Hall tower. He was the only connection the world had with San Francisco after the 1906 earthquake.*

# AMQ March 2022

## *The memoir of Arthur Hayashi, a high school student when Executive Order 9066 was signed February 19, 1942.*

ISSUE NUMBER 1 • MARCH 2022

# Alameda Museum Quarterly

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## A MEMOIR

Arthur Tadashi Hayashi  
October 22, 1922 - May 6, 1994

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The author penned this memoir for his children. The Alameda Museum received a floppy disk and a printed copy of the story in 2006.

The recent conversion of museum archives to a digital format has made it possible to share his story with you. It has been edited for length and clarity.

*The Hayashi family: Tadashi (Arthur), Mousumi (Mabel) and their son, Arthur, with their three sons, Tadashi (Tad), their father Hisao, Hajime (Paul), and Akira (James or Butch). Image: Image: Necada Omer.*



W<sup>hile</sup> the Japanese were the largest ethnic group in Alameda, it was a white man's town with about three black families<sup>1</sup> and a few Hispanic families. As I look back now, I realized we lived in an area in Alameda bounded by the Ferry Building to the north, the Bay to the south, and Broadway to the west, to Willow Street to the east. Both the Buddhist Church and the Methodist Church were located in the middle of this area. I don't know if it was a matter of convenience or if it was a matter of choice, but in the matter as far as real estate was concerned, because we lived in a small area, whether by design or choice, we had our own Japanese.

The majority of families lived in the small area. Most of the men in the community were gardeners, and we had five nurseries and two florists. Our community had our own grocery stores. Our next-door store made tofu and miso. We had a Japanese laundry, a Japanese gas station, shoe repair, barber, bathhouse, and our own doctor, Dr. Iriki (Walter Keisuke Iriki), a Stanford graduate. We also had a laundry across the street and two cleaning

shops. Down the street was the Yokohama Cleaners and ours was called Tokuji Cleaners. Although my father had a cleaners, I can still see him riding his bicycle every day to do housework. My father would then come home to press the clothes at night. My mother would then watch the store that was open late at night for alterations and ironing of the laundry which we took in.

Within our small community we had a Buddhist Temple and a Methodist Church. Both had Japanese Language schools. The Buddhist Language School was located after the schools in the old country when the bell rang for start of classes, the kids lined up by class, bowed together to the teachers, and then made their class. At the Methodist Japanese Language School, when the bell rang for start of classes, we would wander in from the hallway to the basketball court because guys like me only went to Japanese language classes because we had to go to the Japanese Language School after regular school, between 4:00 pm - 6:00 pm, which cut into our playtime.

*Continued on page 2...*

# Alameda Museum *Quarterly*

## ONE WOMAN'S QUEST FOR HEALTH CARE IN ALAMEDA

by Myrna van Lunter

**W**HEN SETTLERS FIRST CAME to what was to become Alameda, medical care as we know today, grounded in strict scientific research and augmented with tested medications and preventative vaccines was beginning to take form.

Early doctors established them-

selves in the developing town. These doctors were trained at specialized medical departments of universities, obtaining an official degree of M.D.—

selves in the developing town. These doctors were trained at specialized medical departments of universities, obtaining an official degree of M.D.—*Medicinae Doctor, Doctor of Medicine*.



*Kate Creedon, Superintendent of the Alameda Sanatorium and Doctor W.O. Smith break ground for the new Alameda Hospital in August, 1924. Nurses and dignitaries, including Mayor Frank Otis (center) assemble for the occasion. Image: Alameda Museum.*

This changed, however, in line with the increasing change in the

with the increase  
practice of medi-

being trained to do more than basic physical cure. Hand-in-hand with a change in attitude towards female doctors, the profession became more respected. The first hospital allowing women on staff—in fact, originally run completely by and for women; both Dr. Kate Van Orden and Dr.

Continued on page 2 ...

**AMQ August 2020**  
*Jack the mailman  
wearing a mask  
makes a delivery  
to the Nurses'  
Home on Clinton  
Avenue during  
the 1918 -1920  
flu pandemic.*



# Pop-Up Exhibits

## An Assemblage of Hats

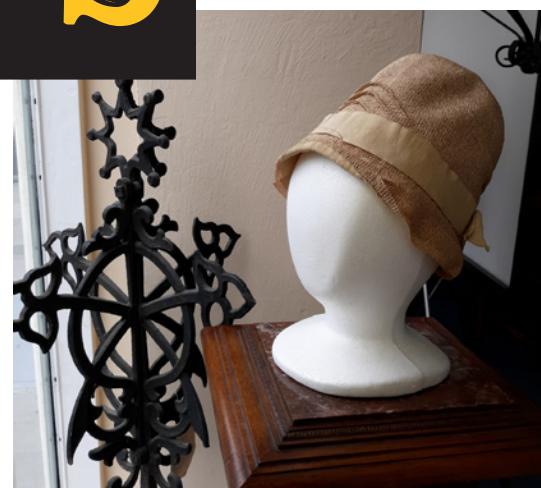
Showcasing items from the museum archives. These shows were visible online and in the storefront on Alameda Avenue.

VISIT OUR POP-UP EXHIBIT 2324 Alameda Avenue



ALAMEDA  
MUSEUM  
ONLINE AT  
[AlamedaMuseum.org/  
temporary-exhibitions](http://AlamedaMuseum.org/temporary-exhibitions)

An  
Assemblage  
*of* HATS



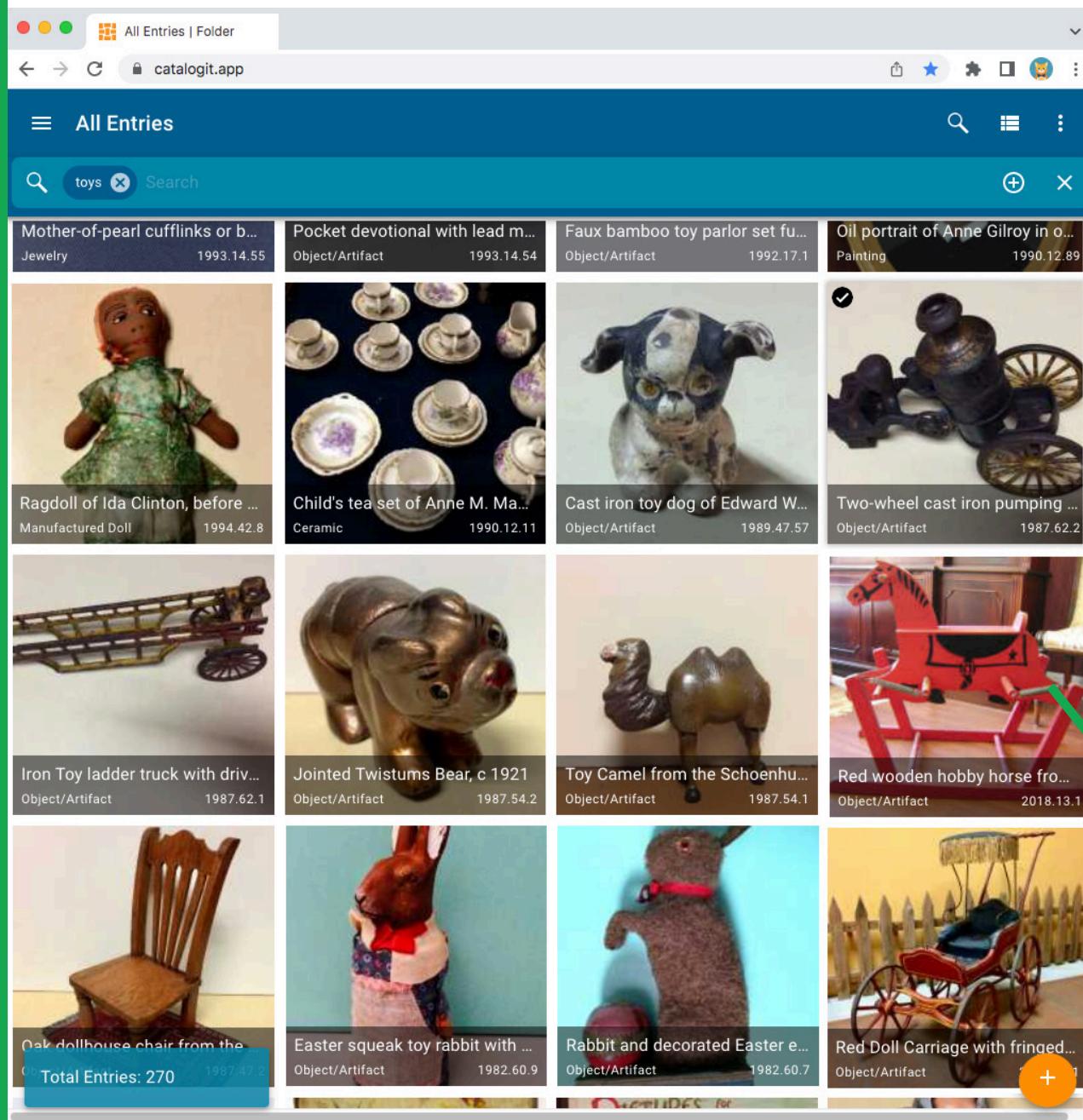
# Pop-Up Exhibits

## Making History 2020

An archive of images, statements and events that became history in 2020.



# Digitizing the Collection



The screenshot shows a digital catalog interface for a museum collection. The top navigation bar includes 'All Entries' and a search bar with the term 'toys'. The main content area displays a grid of 20 artifact cards, each with a thumbnail image, the object name, category, and accession number. The categories include Jewelry, Object/Artifact, Painting, Ceramic, and Object/Artifact. The accession numbers range from 1982.60.7 to 1993.14.55. The artifacts shown include a Ragdoll of Ida Clinton, a Child's tea set, a Cast iron toy dog, a Two-wheel cast iron pumping station, an Iron Toy ladder truck, a Jointed Twistums Bear, a Toy Camel, a Red wooden hobby horse, an Oak dollhouse chair, an Easter squeak toy rabbit, a Rabbit and decorated Easter egg, and a Red Doll Carriage.

Object Name	Category	Accession No.
Mother-of-pearl cufflinks or b...	Jewelry	1993.14.55
Pocket devotional with lead m...	Object/Artifact	1993.14.54
Faux bamboo toy parlor set fu...	Object/Artifact	1992.17.1
Oil portrait of Anne Gilroy in o...	Painting	1990.12.89
Ragdoll of Ida Clinton, before ...	Manufactured Doll	1994.42.8
Child's tea set of Anne M. Ma...	Ceramic	1990.12.11
Cast iron toy dog of Edward W...	Object/Artifact	1989.47.57
Two-wheel cast iron pumping ...	Object/Artifact	1987.62.2
Iron Toy ladder truck with driv...	Object/Artifact	1987.62.1
Jointed Twistums Bear, c 1921	Object/Artifact	1987.54.2
Toy Camel from the Schoenh...	Object/Artifact	1987.54.1
Red wooden hobby horse fro...	Object/Artifact	2018.13.1
Oak dollhouse chair from the ...		
Easter squeak toy rabbit with ...	Object/Artifact	1982.60.9
Rabbit and decorated Easter e...	Object/Artifact	1982.60.7
Red Doll Carriage with fringed...	Object/Artifact	

The museum has over 20,000 objects in its collection. Originally the donation record was typed on a 3" x 5" card and filed in drawers.

Today the information is archived in a digital database widely used by museums.

 CatalogIt

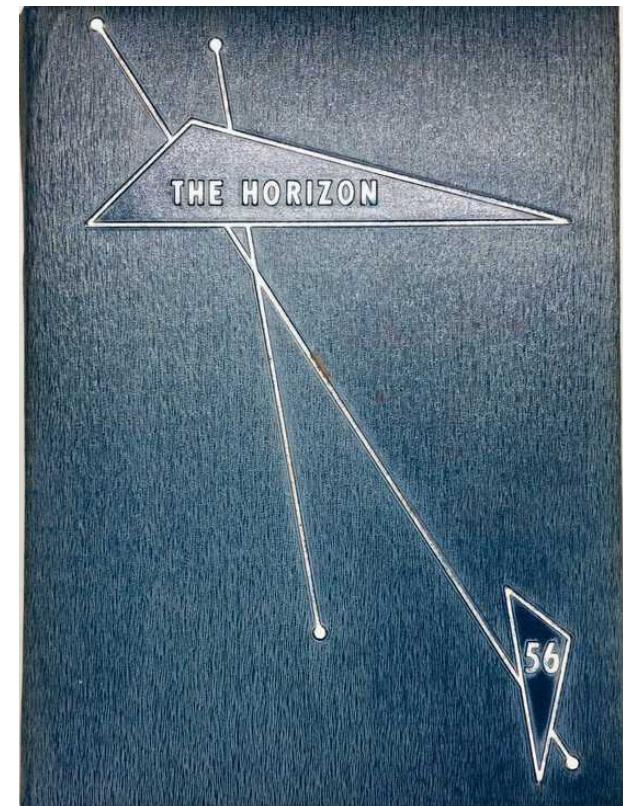
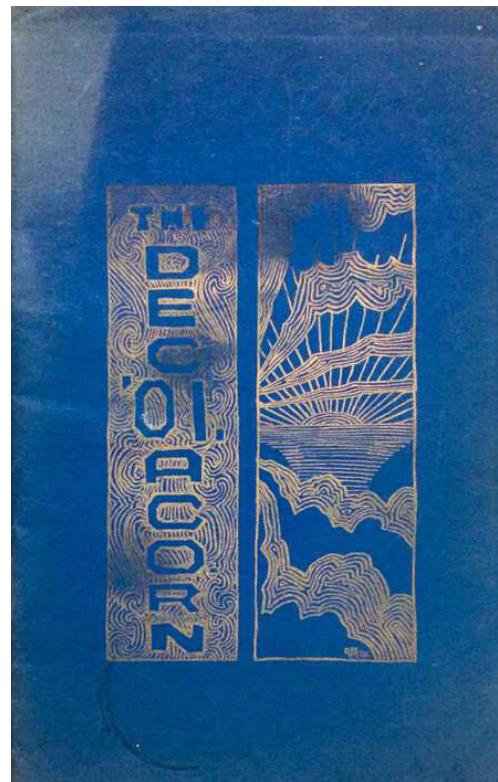
Acc. No. 18.13.1  
*Wonder Horse c. 1950s purchased at Stone's on Santa Clara Avenue. The shop sells bicycles today.*

# Preserving the Collection



Beth Sibley organizing and cataloging high school yearbooks.

Acc. No. 96.112.4  
*Alameda High School December 1901 "Acorn" yearbook. Soft-bound booklet, with gold design. Size: L 9-3/4" X W 6"*



Acc. No. 16.40.1  
*Encinal High School started operations in 1952; 1956 was the first year a Yearbook was produced featuring the first graduates.*

# Preserving the Collection



Textile expert Nancy Martin, assesses a donation to determine its age and to review the materials it is made of.



Acc. No. 22.1.1

*Two-piece satin and floral cut velvet wedding dress. The panel is edged with metal and glass buttons.*



Acc. No. 82.26.1

*A gown purchased at Kahns' Movieland Shop, Oakland, CA. Worn by Mrs. William Murray, wife of the Mayor of Alameda, 1931-1935, to a ball held at Neptune Beach, January 30, 1934.*

*The dress is a replica of a gown worn by Lupe Velez, a famous movie actress of the time.*

# Assessing the Collection

The Alameda Free Library held a collection of Native American artifacts when the museum was established in the basement of the Carnegie. These possessions of the Ohlone people have moved with the museum since that time. Today the Alameda Museum has reached out to three local Ohlone tribes for advice and collaboration on the best path forward.



Acc. No. 91.1.26  
*Pierced abalone shell.*



Acc. No. 91.1.69  
*Obsidian spearhead*



Acc. No. 91.1.167  
*Large circular stone hollowed out.*

*Native American artifacts.*



# Visitors

In 2020 we began counting visitors and having them list their reasons for visiting in the guest book.

## 2020 January - March

**62%** Exhibits  
**34%** Research  
**4%** Shop

## 2021 June - December

**51%** Exhibits  
**44%** Research  
**5%** Store

## 2022

**78%** Exhibits  
**18%** Research  
**4%** Store

## 2023

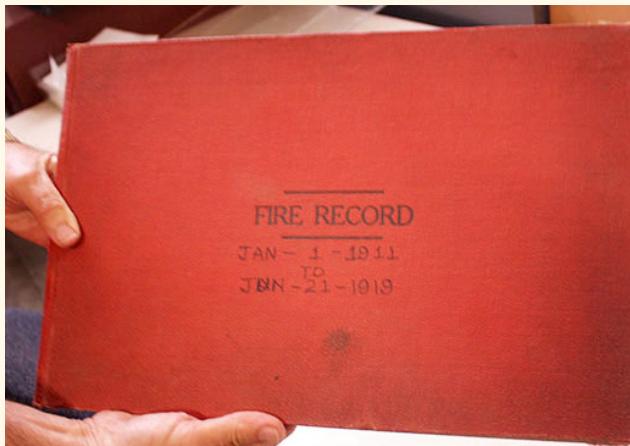
**74%** Exhibits  
**12%** Research  
**14%** Store

## 2023 Monthly Visitors

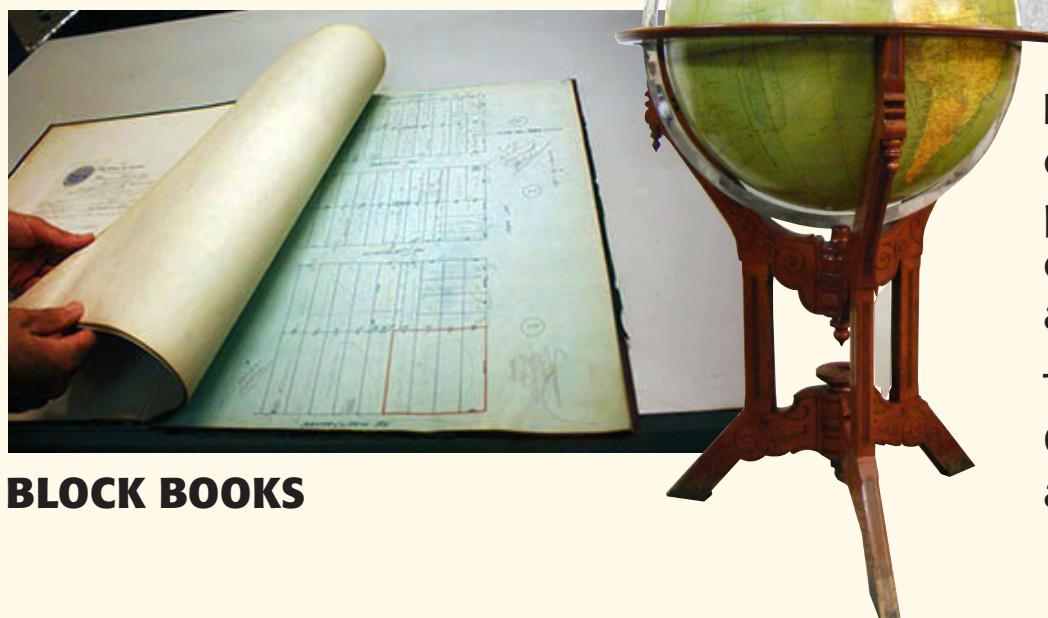
January	<b>224</b>
February	<b>239</b>
March	<b>242</b>
April	<b>281</b>
May	<b>278</b>
June	<b>308</b>
July	<b>918</b>
August	<b>290</b>
September	<b>412</b>
October	<b>428</b>

# Research

The museum holds records that allow researchers an accurate glimpse into the city's history.



**FIRE RECORDS**



**BLOCK BOOKS**

## PHOTO ARCHIVES

contain a variety of subjects:  
public buildings, homes,  
city departments, civic events,  
and portraits.

The globe shown above in the Carnegie Library is now on exhibit at the museum.

# Research

Research questions are answered weekly by email, phone or in person. An appointment is requested for research using the newspaper, maps, documents, blueprints, and photo archives. Projects we have assisted with include:

- Central Avenue Safety Improvement Project: *JRP Historical Consulting*
- Clement Avenue Safety Improvement Project: *JRP Historical Consulting*
- Alameda Marina Development: *AHC Archaeological/Historical Consultants*
- US Maritime Training School: *Page & Turnbull, architects; Planning Dept. City of Alameda; UC Berkeley Environmental Design*
- California Radio Society, Alameda Sun, and Alameda Post: *Newspapers, photo collection, fire records, police records, block books*
- Alameda Japanese American History Project: *Documenting materials pertaining to the Japanese residents of Alameda*
- Family Histories: *Photo search, businesses directories, yearbooks, newspapers, family Bibles, scrapbooks*
- Native American Collection: *Archive list, photos, maps, newspapers*

# Virtual Lecture Series 2022

In 2022 our lecture series became virtual hosted by board member Rasheed Shabazz on Zoom. Seven events were held including:

## ASIAN AMERICAN & PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE MONTH



## NATIVE AMERICAN HERITAGE MONTH

A CONVERSATION WITH

Corrina Gould, tribal chair  
for the Confederated Villages  
of Lisjan Nation.



## LATINO HERITAGE MONTH

A conversation about  
Latino identity, history,  
and politics with  
George Galvis.



## EAST BAY

YESTERDAY

with Liam O'Donoghue

# Virtual Lecture Series 2023



**Placing Yourself in History: The Challenges of Writing a Memoir**  
with historian and author Dorothy Lazard



**Chicana/Latina Arts Histories in the Bay Area**

with Dr. Martina Ayala  
Executive Director of the  
Mission Cultural Center  
for Latino Arts



**Muwekma Ohlone Tribe:**  
Preservation, Recognition and Sovereignty

Charlene C. Nijmeh is the Chairwoman of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe. She is from the Marine-Sanchez lineage that descends from the first peoples of the San Francisco Bay Area.

**Deeply Rooted:**  
Celebrating Filipino/a/x migrations, struggles, and contributions in Alameda



# Plan for the Future

## **Executive Director and the Strategic Plan**

The Alameda Museum has reached a point that it can no longer be managed and run on volunteer power. We need an Executive Director to work with the board to solidify and implement a strategic plan. We are in the process of filling the position.

## **Museum Assessment**

The museum will engage in the STEPS program (Standards and Excellence Program) a self-paced assessment program designed specifically for small-to mid-sized history organizations to review their policies and practices.

## **Online Archives**

The museum has established an online archive available to the public through the CatalogIt Hub on the museum website at [AlamedaMuseum.org](http://AlamedaMuseum.org). We plan to have the CatalogIt database information available at the front desk.

## **Research**

Historian Dennis Evanovsky is currently at the museum on weekends to answer questions and assist with research. Questions are answered via email or phone as received. We can also assist with research by appointment on weekdays.

# Plan for the Future

## **Native American Collection**

The museum has sent a letter to East Bay Ohlone groups requesting a review of the collection and to discuss a responsible outcome for the items. We have met with one tribe and are in communication with the others.

## **Outreach**

Increase community outreach to promote awareness of our resources and promote collaborations with the museum, specifically with groups that have been underserved.

## **Exhibits**

Reimagine our gallery space to broaden the stories told and histories displayed.

## **Internships**

We have re-established our high school community service internship and hope to expand our internships for longer periods.

## **Meyers House**

Increase programming at the Meyers House to include in depth displays on the Meyer sisters who were college educated career women at a time when that was unheard of.

## **Lecture Series**

Continue and expand our lecture series to include hybrid / in person lectures.



*Preserving the Past for the Future*  
*Since 1948*